



Using ongoing assessment in reflective practices

Dynamic Assessment

Dynamic Assessment

- Dynamic Assessment in early childhood context was defined by Olswang and Bain (1996) as “Assessments [that] examine a child’s modifiability when confronted with a difficult, unmastered task, and when provided with adult prompts and cues designed to improve performance.” (p. 415)



The evidence-based coaching practices


- Definition of evidence-based coaching practices was published by Rush and Sheldon (2005). “Coaching in early childhood may be conceptualized as a particular type of help giving practice with in a capacity building model to support people in using existing abilities and developing new skills to attain desired life circumstances (Dunst & Trivette, 1996; Dunst, Trivette & Lapointe, 1999; Trivette & Dunst 1998).”

Dynamic Assessment augments help-giving practices?

- Information about modifiability that comes from dynamic assessment may add to this help giving practice of coaching. When interventionists understand the literature that surrounds stimulability of children or the parent they better know how to build capacity.



History of Dynamic Assessment



A. *Early beginnings*- Dynamic assessment is theoretically rooted in Vygotsky's theory on the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1979; Lidz, 1991).

B. *Assessing potential*- Dynamic assessment Standardized attempts But appears to be more often an informal process especially in early childhood settings and is also referred to as mediated learning (Tzuriel, 2000) or trial intervention.

Dynamic Assessment in the early childhood arena- Early grade and preschool aged children have been tested using formal and informal dynamic assessment procedures since the early 80s (Lidz, 1991). Most compelling is the use of graduated prompts with preschool aged children to measure responsiveness on target behaviors (Burns, 1987, Bain & Olswang, 1995; Olswang & Bain, 1996, Tzuriel, 2000).

Research

- 1. Dynamic Assessment Research associated with preschool children is somewhat predictable in regards to how certain prompts and a level of support elicit language.
- 2. Although toddlers also were responsive to levels of support in a similar way as preschool children were (Tyler, 1996), toddler aged children were less systematic in their response to subsequent intervention.
- 3. Trial intervention or dynamic assessment was studied in seven early interventionist that worked with young children the early childhood service providers used that knowledge to work with families (ages birth to three) .

Interview with Stacie Goffin, Ed.D. Principal Goffin Strategy Group

Stacie: As advocates, we tend to spend most of our time helping others to understand the importance of children's earliest learning years, convincing them of the importance of the work we do, and developing supportive public policies on behalf of that work. I think we need to attend more to what I call "internal advocacy." Children and their families deserve access to competent practitioners regardless of the program setting, and I believe we need to advance ECE as a recognized professional field of practice. This transformation would allow us to define ECE as a field of practice and assume responsibility for ensuring its practitioners have the knowledge, skills, and disposition necessary for effective practice, and to ensure systems are in place for verifying that our practices well serve serve children and their families.

Elements of Dynamic Assessment or Trial Intervention

- Follow the child's lead or engage the child in age appropriate activity.
- Know the child's target outcome.
- Prompt using scaffold levels of prompting
- Observe and track responsiveness.
- Reflect with family

Reflective Practices

Coming to a Deeper Understanding

- Reflection is a means of coming to a deeper understanding of what a person already knows/is doing and/ or what modifications or new knowledge/skills might be necessary in current and future situations to obtain a desired outcome.
- (Dathan D. Rush M'Lisa L. Sheldon Melinda Raab ; FIPP Casetools 2008)

Reflective Practices

- Reflection and active participation/engagement on the part of the person being coached are used to strengthen that person's competence related to what he/she knows to do, and build upon current knowledge or skills to acquire new ideas and actions.
- (Dathan D. Rush M'Lisa L. Sheldon Melinda Raab ; FIPP Casetools 2008)

Reflective Practices

- The **more the person's capacity** has been built (i.e., increased confidence and competence), the better the person becomes at **more independently** achieving his/her desired outcomes now and in the future.
- (Dathan D. Rush M'Lisa L. Sheldon Melinda Raab ; FIPP Casetools 2008)
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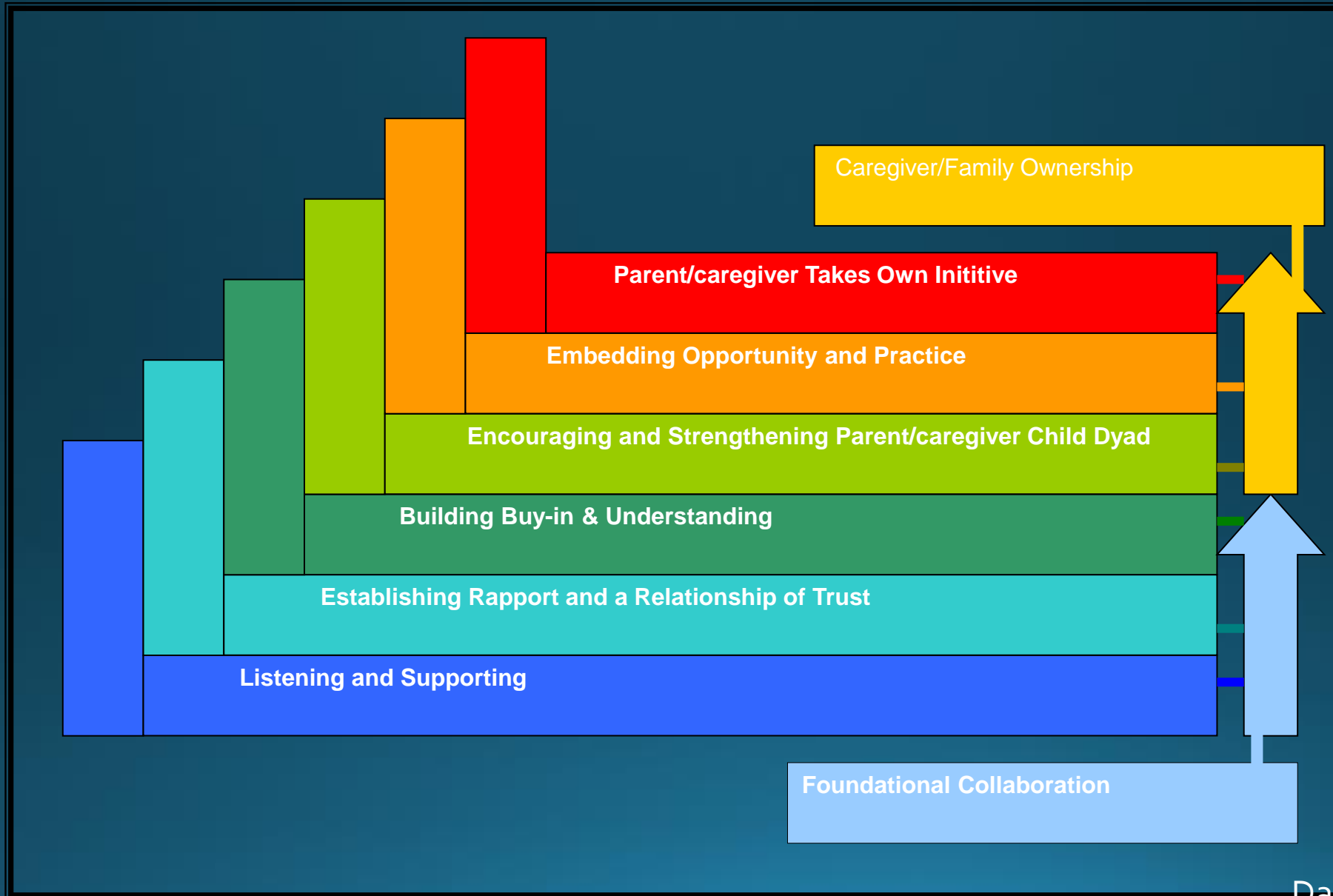
Reflective Practices

- The role of a coach is to mobilize experiences, interactions, and opportunities in conjunction with mediating the person's deeper understanding of what is or could be working in order to reach the end goal. This process is consistent with the literature on adult learning by
 - (1) starting with what the person already knows or is doing related to his/her identified priorities,
 - (2) building upon existing knowledge and skills,
 - (3) applying the new information and strategies in meaningful contexts, and then
 - (4) evaluating the effectiveness of his/her actions and generating alternative approaches (Bransford et al., 2000)
- Bransford, J. D., Brown, A. L., Cocking, R. R., Donovan, M. S., Bransford, J. D., & Pellegrino, J. W. (Eds.). (2000). How people learn: Brain, mind, experience, and school. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. Bruder, M. B.,

Framework for Reflective Questioning

(Dathan D. Rush M'Lisa L. Sheldon Melinda Raab ; FIPP Casetools 2008) Case 2

Content\Type	Awareness	Analysis	Alternatives	Actions
Knowledge and Understanding (What You Know)	What do you think about this....?	How does that compare to what you want to know?	How could you find out about different views/ideas?	How do you plan to learn more?
Practice (What you did)	What did you try? What are doing now?	How is that consistent with what you intended?	How would you go about that?	What do you plan to do?
Outcomes (What Result)	How did that work?	How did you know you needed to do more?	What different could you have done to get expected outcomes?	Which option could get the best result?
Evaluation (What about the process)	What opportunities were useful? What supports were most helpful?	How was this consistent with what you expected?	What other opportunities would be useful?	What opportunities do you want to access?



Voices from the field

Emilee was a developmental specialist working for the state infant/toddler program. With sixteen years of experience, she had a way of making children and parents feel at ease. She was a warm, sincere professional with degrees in Adult Education/Vocational Education and Early Childhood Special/Education. At the time of the interview, Emilee was providing services primarily in the home. Emilee described a family who had a premature twin who died. The mother was mourning and struggling with this loss and, as a result, neglected the surviving twin, who was premature and lagging behind in development:

“There were so many times I would go out there, and I would be working with the baby, but Mom would just be, you know, she was just so much in grief over the other baby that she had lost, and we just did a lot of just sitting and crying together and trying to figure [it] out! She and her husband were dealing with this death in completely different ways, and helping her figure out how to keep her marriage together and how to give her other kids the attention they needed. There were so many other issues [other] than this baby’s therapy that mom needed to deal with, and she wasn’t the kind of person who would go to a therapist or a counselor. So when I was the adult that would show up once a week, she really just needed to talk about it, and, in doing all of that, eventually she got to where she knew I was a safe person she could talk to, and it got to where we would focus more on the [surviving] baby with every visit.”

Emilee worked with the family until the baby became a toddler. During that time, she was able to successfully move the focus to the baby’s development needs. At 18 months, the boy was discharged from services. The mother hugged Emilee, cried, and said, “You were the person that I needed in my life at that time.”



Being Reflective with Parents
using Dynamic Assessments

Responsiveness and Stimulability

Being Reflective with Parents using Dynamic Assessments

- Since one of the main outcomes of dynamic assessment is discovering targets that are stimuable and those that are not, **stimulability becomes valuable** in working with families.
- Stimulable targets tend to be more **generalizable and need less direct intervention** (Powell, Elbert and Dinnsen, 1991).

The diagram consists of two light blue ovals on a dark blue background. The oval on the left is smaller and contains the text 'Trial Intervention'. The oval on the right is larger and contains the text 'Parent Supporting Everyday Practice and Development'. The larger oval is positioned to the right of the smaller one, suggesting a progression or a broader context.

Trial
Intervention

Parent Supporting Everyday Practice and
Development

Being Reflective with Parents using Dynamic Assessments

- **Non-stimulable** targets, on the other hand, require elicitation and correcting/ feedback processes (Tyler, 1996). These processes may or may not be part of the parent's usable or teachable repertoire.



Being Reflective with Parents using Dynamic Assessments

- Choosing **skills that support function life experiences** that are based on stimulability targets, contribute to maintaining meaningful family-centered practices.



Being Reflective with Parents using Dynamic Assessments

- Since in evidence-based coaching approach is not passing on to the parents activities to practice with skills that have shown to be stimulative, the interventionist must be careful not to use dynamic assessment for that purpose.



Being Reflective with Parents using Dynamic Assessments

- Instead, the interventionist should be looking at elicited participation in life's functional activities and the conditions commensurate to successful participation.



Being Reflective with Parents using Dynamic Assessments

- This example shows that through an informed interventionist that understands the stimulability and capabilities of both the child and the parent, the interventionist can effectively increase ability in the child and build capacity of the parent. Now with this design the child's needs are effectively being met and the parent is taking ownership in facilitating growth in a natural setting and activity of interest.
- Case study /simulation #1

Using Dynamic Assessment in Capacity Building of Parents

A. Dynamic assessment and trial intervention helps identify the effective intervention conditions and lures, associated with target behavior.

B. The process of Interventionists collaborating with parents to determine strategies or other conditions that are responsive to unique family conditions and aspiration can be used to build their child's functionality and is core to building capacity in parents (Bruder, 2000, Rehab, 2005; Trivette, Dunst, Hamby, 1996).



Using Dynamic Assessment in Capacity Building of Parents

C. Understanding where capacity building comes from is essential to expanding intervention. An essential piece of capacity building is in the collaborative assessments of trial intervention that are often products of attempting to address the child's and parent's needs, concerns, and insights coupled with the interventionist's expertise on development, strategies and curriculum.

D. Dynamic assessment can also be used to determine the parent's responsiveness.

E. Paying attention to parents and how they choose to elicit functional targets can also be helpful to the interventionist..

Using Dynamic Assessment as a Decisive Factor for efficacy in Joint Visiting

A. Another way trial intervention or dynamic assessment can be used is by determining the need or duration of joint visiting. Evidenced based coaching practices advocates for a primary coach approach for teaming of services in early childhood (Sheldon and Rush, 2007).

B. Some questions that arise in this model is when does joint visits need to be scheduled and how long should they continue one, two or more sessions? The idea behind the joint visits is to support the family and the primary coach in reaching functional and meaningful outcomes.



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Using Dynamic Assessment as a Decisive Factor for efficacy in Joint Visiting

C. If the child is not stimuable and the skill is essential for development and functionality in meeting the needs of the parents and family, the joint visiting may need to be prolonged to establish that skill.

D. Dynamic assessment/ trial intervention can be used to identify levels of intervention that elicits targets and the responsiveness of families to the information given to them.

Case study /simulation #3 C-Man



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Simulation Activity

Conclusion

- Dynamic assessment appears to be one essential practice that helps interventionists know how to help families and children. Being attuned to modifiability may give the insight to more effectively build capacity in families and identifying target skills that support functionality. Finding stimuable targets may increase insight to the coaching and helps define the extent of joint visiting. Dynamic assessment practices increase interventionist competence in decision making during coaching practices. Dynamic Assessment may help clarify when and what a family or primary coach needs to work on next.